

Message Text

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ACTION DHA-02

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, TH

SUBJECT: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN THAILAND - - UNHCR

FOLLOWING FYI IS TEXT OF TELEGRAPHIC REPORT RECEIVED JULY 15
BY UNHCR/GENEVA FROM UNHCR DIRECTOR OPERATIONS JAEGER
RELATING LATTERS RECENT VISIT BANGKOK FOR DISCUSSIONS
CONCERNING SUBJECT REFUGEES: QUOTE:

1. AFTER PRELIMINARY MEETING MINFORAFF HAD DETAILED
DISCUSSIONS MINISTRY INTERIOR WITH DEPUTY MINISTER WHO IS
CHAIRMAN THAI COMMITTEE DISPLACED PERSONS, PERMANENT
UNDER-SECRETARY AND OTHER HIGH RANKING
OFFICIALS DIRECTLY CONCERNED. FOLLOWING ARE PRELIMINARY
RESULTS DISCUSSIONS WHICH WILL CONTINUE UPON OUR RETURN
BANGKOK NEXT WEEK:

A. MAIN FEATURES THAI POSITION: GOVERNMENT DOES NOT WISH
IN PRINCIPLE REPEAT IN PRINCIPLE ANY INDOCHINESE RECENTLY
ARRIVED TO SETTLE PERMANENTLY. THIS PUBLIC POSTURE
EXPLICABLE ON POLITICAL GROUNDS PARTICULARLY IN CONTEXT
GOOD NEIGHBORLY RELATIONSHIPS IN HIGHLY SENSITIVE AREAS
AND CHARGED ATMOSPHERE. HOWEVER, IT IS FULLY
REALIZED THAT REMNANTS OF OVERALL PROBLEMS MAY REMAIN AT
LEAST TWO TO THREE YEARS.

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B. IN CONTEXT ABOVE GOVERNMENT FAVORS PRIMARILY REPATRIATION AND SECONDLY RESETTLEMENT THIRD COUNTRY. WHILE THESE TWO SOLUTIONS EXPECTED SOLVE PROBLEM SOUTH VIETNAMESE, IT IS REALIZED THAT IN CASE CAMBODIANS ONLY RESETTLEMENT LIMITED NUMBERS ENVISAGEABLE THIS STAGE. RE LAOTIONS SITUATION MUCH MORE COMPLEX AS EXPLAINED BELOW.

C. GOVERNMENT AGREES CENTRAL ROLE FOR UNHCR IN PROMOTION OF REPATRIATION AND RESETTLEMENT. PENDING PERMANENT SOLUTION GOVERNMENT WISHES RECEIVED ASSISTANCE CARE AND MAINTENANCE WITHIN OVERALL CONTEXT MENTIONED ABOVE.

D. CARE AND MAINTENANCE WHICH IN FACT "ASSISTANCE PENDING DURABLE SOLUTION" EXPECTED MAINLY IN FOLLOWING DOMAINS: FOOD, MEDICAL CARE, SHELTER, CLOTHING IN THAT ORDER.

E. GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS ALL INDOCHINESE AS "DISPLACED PERSONS" AND NOT REFUGEES AND NOT BEING CONSCIOUS UNHCR ROLE IN INDOCHINA EXPECTS UNHCR PLAY POSITIVE ROLE IN SHARING BURDEN WITH GOVERNMENT.

F. GOVERNMENT OVERALL PLANS BEING ELABORATED BY MINISTRY INTERIOR, COMMITTEE FOR DISPLACED PERSON. MINIMUM EXPENDITURES AT PRESENT PER PERSON PER DAY ESTIMATED EIGHT BAHT, I.E. 40 US CENTS. BOTH GOVERNMENT AND UNHCR BELIEVE LEVEL ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE MINIMUM IN ORDER AVOID SOCIAL AND INTERCOMMUNAL FRICTIONS WITHIN COUNTRY AND AVOID CREATION "PROFESSIONAL REFUGEES".

G. GOVERNMENT PLANNING ASSEMBLE ALL INDOCHINESE IN WELL IDENTIFIED FOUR TO SIX AREAS/CAMPS AND AGREES UNHCR VISITS THESE AREAS. THIS CONNECTION GOVERNMENT ISSUING 15 JULY OFFICIAL PROCLAMATION DEFINING PROBLEM DISPLACED PERSONS AND ASKING ALL ILLEGAL ENTRANTS RPT ENTRANTS TO REGISTER WITH IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES WITHIN ONE MONTH IN ORDER EVENTUALLY CONFIDENTIAL

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TO ASSEMBLE THEM IN WELL DEFINED AREAS.

2. UNHCR POSITION WAS EXPLAINED AS FOLLOWS:

A. WILLING ASSIST GOVERNMENT PROMOTE DURABLE SOLUTIONS.

B. WILLING CONTACT COUNTRIES FOR RESETTLEMENT

AND TO EXTENT POSSIBLE PARTIES CONCERNED FOR
REPATRIATION.

C. ARE WRITING TO GOVERNMENT EXPLAINING SCOPE AND
MODALITIES UNHCR ASSISTANCE AND SUBMITTING DRAFT
AGREEMENTS BASED ON EXCHANGE OF LETTERS SAME MODEL
AS IN INDOCHINA IN ORDER FINALIZE AND HOPEFULLY
CONCLUDE AGREEMENT NEXT WEEK.

D. WILLING MAKE PRELIMINARY ALLOCATION 10 MILLION
BAHT, I.E. APPROXIMATELY HALF MILLION DOLLARS IN
ORDER START WORK FORTHWITH.

3. RE LAOTIANS IN THAILAND EXACT TOTAL NUMBER STILL
UNCERTAIN AND VARIES ACCORDING SOURCE INFORMATION.
LAOTIAN DISPLACED PERSONS DIVIDED IN THREE CATEGORIES:
(1) ETHNIC LAO WHICH SMALL GROUP NOT EXCEEDING 500;
(2) THAI DAM BIGGER GROUP BUT NOT EXCEEDING 2,000;
(3) BIGGEST GROUP MEO NUMBER VARIES FROM 9,000 TO
18,000 DEPENDING SOURCE INFORMATION. NATURALLY MEO
GROUP REPRESENTS MOST COMPLEX PROBLEM AND ALL KINDS
OF THEORIES CIRCULATING REGARDING THEIR PRESENT
AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES. HOWEVER PUBLICLY THAI AND
LAO GOVERNMENTS FAVOR REPATRIATION. DURING DISCUSSIONS
AGREED UNHCR APPROACH LAO GOVERNMENT IN ORDER PROMOTE
REPATRIATION. MATTER ALREADY DISCUSSED VIENTIANE
AND WILL REQUIRE FOLLOW-UP BY CUENOD. OBVIOUSLY
OVERALL QUESTION LAOTIAN DISPLACED PERSONS WILL
REQUIRE CLOSE CONSULTATION AND COOPERATION BOTH
GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED.

4. NUMBER CAMBODIANS ACCORDING THAI AUTHORITIES
APPROXIMATELY 7,000. INFLUX AT REDUCED LEVEL STILL
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CONTINUING. GOVERNMENT REALIZES PERMANENT SOLUTION
FOR ALL MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE NEAR FUTURE.

5. NUMBER SOUTH VIETNAMESE APPROXIMATELY 1,500.
EXPECT RESETTLEMENT MAINLY USA AND REPATRIATION WILL
SOLVE PROBLEM.

6. FOR NEXT WEEK MEETING ORGANIZED WITH ALL
CONCERNED IN BANGKOK TO REVIEW OVERALL SITUATION
UNDER CHAIRMANSHIP THAI RED CROSS. PARTICIPANTS WILL
BE REPRESENTATIVES MINISTRY FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
MINISTRY INTERIOR, UNHCR, ICEM AND INTERNATIONAL
RED CROSS. ALSO EXPECT NEXT WEEK COMPLETE ALL
ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMENCEMENT IMPORTANT UNHCR
PROGRAM IN THAILAND IN LINE WITH PRELIMINARY PLANNING

DONE AT HEADQUARTERS AFTER WASHINGTON DISCUSSIONS
AND AS DEFINED UNDER 2 ABOVE. UNQUOTE ABRAMS

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